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TAGS: ETTC PREL MCAP IR RS

SUBJECT: RUSSIAN MFA DISMISSES REPORTS OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT SALES TO IRAN

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Daniel A. Russell. Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

(C) On July 31, Embassy raised media reports that Russia plans to sell long-range Sukhoi fighter aircraft to Iran with Andrey Odnoral, Arms Technology and Transfer Specialist in the Foreign Ministry's Department for Disarmament and Security Affairs. Odnoral told us that the purported transfer to Iran of 250 Su-30 fighter aircraft, along with 20 Il-78 air refueling tankers, was a "fairy tale." He stated that Moscow valued its international reputation and would not transfer weapons to Iran that were clearly in violation of existing UN Security Council resolutions. Odnoral said no negotiations were ongoing between Rosoboroneksport and Iranian officials to transfer aircraft or any other weapons systems to Tehran. He added that Russia did not currently have the capability to produce that quantity of fighter aircraft.

RUSSELL